

Felony Probation Drug Court Graduation

Yolo County Superior Court will hold a court proceeding and formal ceremony on May 2, 2016, for graduates of the Court's Felony Probation Drug Court. Judge Janet Gaard will preside over the ceremony which will be held at 2:30 p.m. in Department 4 of the courthouse located at 1000 Main Street in Woodland.

Felony Probation Drug Court, a specialty court operating in Yolo County since 1999, is responsible for handling cases involving substance-abusing offenders through comprehensive supervision by the court and probation, drug testing, and treatment services. Felony Probation Drug Court offers individuals facing criminal charges for non-violent crimes, an opportunity to enter a substance abuse recovery program in lieu of state prison. The requirements of the program are strict because the road to recovery is not easy. Each client must complete an intensive residential treatment program, is tested frequently, must attend substance abuse recovery meetings and make regular court appearances in order to comply with the requirements of Felony Probation Drug Court.

Statistics show that Drug Courts are one of the most successful programs in diverting criminal offenders from the "revolving-door" syndrome of returning to incarceration due to active addiction. Not only is recidivism reduced, but lives are being changed for the better, and families are being reunited. Additionally, government and consequently the taxpayers are saving money. It costs thousands of dollars less to treat an individual than it does to incarcerate the same individual. Collectively the three individuals to graduate were subjected to suspended sentences of 18 years in state/county prison.

According to Judge Janet Gaard, who presides over the Felony Probation Drug Court calendar, "As an alternative to prison, Felony Drug Court provides criminal offenders who have serious substance abuse problems the right mix of treatment and accountability they need to change their lives. It has proven to be a successful, cost-effective program that results in better outcomes for the offenders and their families and assists them in becoming productive members of society."

Representatives from participating agencies and providers will attend the ceremony to offer their congratulations to the three graduates.